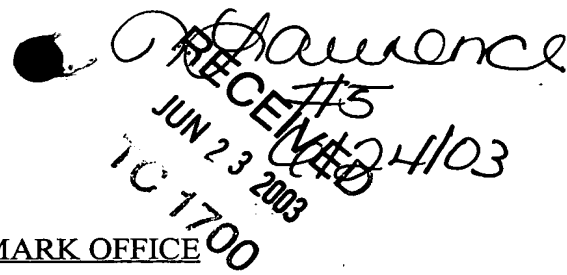


4406-0011-2



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF: :
Takaaki INOUE : EXAMINER: HANDY, D
SERIAL NO: 09/492,451 :
FILED: January 27, 2000 : GROUP ART UNIT: 1743
FOR: AUTOMATED CHEMICAL SYNTHESIZER
AND METHOD FOR DETECTING
LIQUID SHORTAGES IN THE SAME

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

In response to the Office Action dated March 20, 2003, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-identified application based on discussions as follows:

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are presently pending in this application.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-12 and 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Petschek et al. (U.S. Patent 5,389,339); and Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Petschek et al. in view of Stylli et al. (U.S. Patent 6,472,218).